

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BRIDGE 01734 01 OF 02 272145Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 EB-08 TRSE-00 AID-05 COME-00 /086 W
-----102264 272222Z /65

P R 271815Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3243
INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
CINCLANT FOR POLAD
COMNAVFORCARIB ROOSEVELT ROADS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BRIDGETOWN 1734

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, MPOL, PFOR, PGOV, PINR, BB, US
SUBJECT: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON RENEWAL OF NAVAL FACILITY
AGREEMENT

REFS: A) BRIDGETOWN 1720 B) BRIDGETOWN 1695 C) BRIDGETOWN
1463

SUMMARY: MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HENRY FORDE ON JULY
26 CASTIGATED THE FORMER DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (DLP)
GOVERNMENT FOR ITS FAILURE TO OBTAIN ECONOMIC BENEFITS
FROM THE 1961 AGREEMENT FOR THE UP NAVAL FACILITY IN BARBADOS;
OUTLINED A STRICT GOB NEGOTIATING POSITION FOR A RENEWAL OF THE
AGREEMENT, INCLUDING FULFILMENT OF ALL PROVISIONS OF THE
1961 ACCORD AND RETROACTIVE COMPENSATION; AND CHARACTERIZED
THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS AS ONLY PREPARATORY, NOT PRELI-
MINARY. FORDE'S REMARKS CAME IN THE BARBADOS HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
WHICH WAS CONSIDERING A BILL TO TRANSFER THE TITLE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BRIDGE 01734 01 OF 02 272145Z

TO THE LAND UPON WHICH THE NAVAL FACILITY IS LOCATED
FROM THE UK ADMIRALTY TO THE CROWN, I.E. THE GOB. WHILE
THE OPPOSITION DLP DID NOT ACCEPT FORDE'S CHARGES OF DLP
NEGLIGENCE IN NOT FULLY IMPLEMENTING THE AGREEMENT FROM
1961 TO 1976, ONLY ONE DLP MEMBER ARGUED THAT CONTINUED
OPERATION OF THE FACILITY BY THE USN WAS NOT IN BARBADOS'
INTEREST. THE TRANSFER BILL WAS ADOPTED IN AN ATMOS-

PHERE BEST DESCRIBED AS "RENEWAN BUT GET AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IN RETURN." FORDE'S EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION IN DESCRIBING DLP NEGLIGENCE AND IN PUBLICLY NOTING PAST BENEFITS THAT STILL MIGHT BE WON PLACES ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON THE USG TO BE FORTHCOMING IN PROVIDING SOME FORM OF RETROACTIVE COMPENSATION AND FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSOCIATED BENEFITS UNDER PROVISIONS OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT. FORDE ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT OTHER ISLANDS HAD RECEIVED ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM THE 1961 AGREEMENT AND THAT THERE EXISTS A LONG HISTORY OF LINKAGE BETWEEN USDOD INSTALLATIONS AND AID PROGRAMS IN THE CARIBBEAN. END SUMMARY.

END CONFIDENTIAL. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. AS PREDICTED IN REF B, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER HENRY FORDE TRIGGERED A GENERAL DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE US NAVAL FACILITY IN BARBADOS WHEN HE INTRODUCED A BILL DESIGNED TO TRANSFER THE TITLE OF THE LAND UPON WHICH THE NAVAL FACILITY SITS FROM THE UK ADMIRALTY TO THE CROWN (BARBADOS). FORDE OPENED THE DEBATE WITH A 45 MINUTE SPEECH TO THE BARBADOS HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY IN WHICH HE CHARGED THE FORMER DLP GOVERNMENT WITH FAILING TO PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC COMPENSATION AFTER THE 1961 AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND THE FEDERATION OF THE WEST INDIES. FORDE CITED TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, ANTIGUA, ST. LUCIA AND JAMAICA AS TERRITORIES THAT HAD MOVED PAST
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BRIDGE 01734 01 OF 02 272145Z

THE STAGE OF SIGNING THE AGREEMENT TO THE STAGE OF SUBMITTING REQUESTS FOR US ASSISTANCE IN LIEU OF CHARGING RENTAL FEES FOR FACILITY USE. IN THE CASE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, FORDE SAID, AN ESTIMATED US\$10 MILLION PACKAGE WAS GIVEN, INCLUDING INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT.

2. FORDE SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT THE FAULT FOR BARBADOS' FAILURE TO GET ANY COMPENSATION FOR ITS FACILITY LAY WITH THE DLP NOT WITH THE UNITED STATES. "THE US COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO FORCE ASSISTANCE DOWN OUR THROAT," HE ADDED. FORDE SAID BARBADOS WOULD NEGOTIATE WITH THE US IN A FRIENDLY MANNER AS BEFITS DISCUSSIONS WITH AN "ALLY", BUT THAT BARBADOS WOULD ATTEMPT TO GET ALL IT COULD OUT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS (REF B). THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER ALSO REFERRED TO EVENTS OF JULY 22 AND 23 (REF A) AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE NEED FOR THE US TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING IN PROVIDING INFORMATION AND CONSULTING WITH THE GOB.

3. AFTER FORMER PRIME MINISTER ERROL BARROW ATTEMPTED TO DEFEND HIS DLP GOVERNMENT, OPPOSITION MEMBER DR. RAMASES CADDLE TERMED THE FACILITY "AN AFFRONT TO OUR SOVEREIGNTY" AND "AN UNDESIRABLE MILITARY PRESENCE" AND

COYLY CONGRATULATED THE BARBADOS GOVERNMENT FOR TAKING THE FIRST LEGAL STEP TOWARDS GETTING RID OF THE AMERICAN FACILITY. THE PACKED VISITORS' GALLERY GASPED IN RESPONSE TO CADDLE'S COMMENT THAT BARBADIANS WOULD "BREATHE A SIGN OF RELIEF" WHEN THE FACILITY IS GONE. OTHER OPPOSITION MEMBERS DID NOT SUPPORT CADDLE'S IDEOLOGICALLY INSPIRED POSITION. OPPOSITION LEADER FREDERICK SMITH TOLD FORDE "GET BILLIONS, MILLIONS AND WE WILL BE UNSTINTING IN OUR PRAISE OF YOUR SUCCESS." DLP MEMBER EVELYN GREAVES, WHO REPRESENTS THE ST. LUCY CONSTITUENCY IN WHICH THE FACILITY IS LOCATED, SAID HE HAD REPORTS THAT THE FACILITY WAS GOING TO MOVE OUT (WITH ITS JOBS FOR PEOPLE IN ST. LUCY AND A \$1 MILLION DOLLAR INPUT INTO THE ECONOMY, UNDERSTOOD) AND ASKED FORDE TO MAKE CLEAR THE POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT IN CURRENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BRIDGE 01734 01 OF 02 272145Z

NEGOTIATIONS AND THE STATE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

4. IN REPLY TO THE REMARKS OF THE OPPOSITION, FORDE TERMED THE 1961 AGREEMENT "A GOOD AGREEMENT" AND REITERATED HIS CHARGE THAT THE DLP HAD FAILED TO FOLLOW UP ON POSSIBLE ECONOMIC BENEFITS. "I WILL NOT LOSE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO HAMMER YOU*" FORDE EXCLAIMED. CITING AS OBVIOUS THE NEED TO REMAIN SILENT ON THE SPECIFICS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, FORDE TERMED TALKS WITH THE US AS BEING AT "THE PREPARATORY STAGE, NOT EVEN THE PRELIMINARY STAGE" AND SAID THAT "BARBADOS CANNOT CONSIDER A NEW AGREEMENT UNTIL PROVISIONS OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT ARE CONSIDERED AND FULFILLED (REF A). FORDE CONTINUED BY SAYING BARBADOS "HASN'T RECEIVED THE SUBSTANTIAL WARMTH IN RETURN THAT WE HAVE GIVEN THE UNITED STATES" AND ADDED IN CONCLUSION THAT IF THE US AND THE GOB COULDN'T TALK AND REACH AGREEMENT ON THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE NAVAL FACILITY (WHICH HE SAID CONTRIBUTED TO THE SECURITY OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC, CARIBBEAN AND BARBADOS, AND PROTECTED THE UNITED STATES' "SOFT UNDERBELLY"), "THEN WE CAN'T EXPECT TO DO SO ON MUCH ELSE."

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BRIDGE 01734 02 OF 02 272203Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 EB-08 AID-05 COME-00 /086 W
-----102487 272222Z /13

P R 271815Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3244
INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NASSAU
AMEMBASSY PRRT OF SPAIN
CINCLANT FOR POLAD
COMNAVFORCARIB ROOSEVELT ROADS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BRIDGETOWN 1734

5. THE HOUSE PROCEEDINGS WERE OBSERVED BY BOTH A CUBAN NATIONAL, WHO IS OSTENSIBLY A CUBANA EMPLOYEE, AND LOCAL RADICAL ACTIVIST RALPH GONZALVES. THE LATTER A NATIVE OF ST. VINCENT, BILLS HIMSELF AN EXPERT ON AND CRITIC OF "U.S. AND OTHER IMPERIALIST MILITARY BASES IN THE CARIBBEAN."

6. COMMENT: FORDE WAS BRILLIANT IN HIS ATTACK ON THE FORMER DLP GOVERNMENT FOR ITS FAILUR TO GAIN ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR BARBADOS UNDER THE 1961 AGREEMENT AND STOOD AS A CHAMPION WHEN NOTING THA THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY (BLP) WAS NOW SEEKING TO GET THOSE PAST BENEFITS AND A HOST OF OTHERS FOR BARBADOS IN TALKS WITH THE USG. HE USED HIS SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE AND HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE 1961 ACCORD TO BROWBEAT THE OPPOSITION, OFTEN HOLDING ALOFT A THREE-INCH THICK GREENFILE FOLDER ON THE NVAL FACILITY AGREEMENT AND ISSUES THAT THAT HE SAID WAS "VERY THIN IN THE YEARS 1961-1976, THE YEARS OF THE FORMER GOVERNMENT." IN MAKING THIS STRONG CASE FOR PAST ECONOMIC BENEFITS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BRIDGE 01734 02 OF 02 272203Z

DUE FROM THE USG (REF C AND PREVIOUS), HOWEVER, FORDE PLACED ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON THE US TO BE FORTHCOMING IN TERMS OF PROVIDING SOME RETROACTIVE COMPENSATION AND FULLY IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR ASSOCIATED BENEFITS UNDER THE EXISTING AGREEMENT. FORDE ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT OTHER ISLANDS HAD RECEIVED SUCH BENEFITS AND THAT THERE EXISTS A LONG HISTORY OF LINKAGE BETWEEN US DOD INSTALLATIONS AND AID PROGRAMS. IN THE CASE OF ANTIGUA, FOR EXAMPLE, FORDE CLAIMED THE US PROVIDED \$350,000, RENOVATION OF COOLIDGE AIRPORT, A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS AND A CORN DRYING AND PROCESSING FACTORY IN RETURN FOR US FACILITIES THERE. EXCEPT FOR CADDLEAJS COMMENTS, IT WAS EVIDENT THAT THERE IS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR

THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE NAVAL FACILITY HERE IN RETURN FOR AMPLE COMPENSATION. THE GOB APPARENTLY BELIEVES SUCH COMPENSATION SHOULD INCLUDE RETROACTIVE CONSIDERATION, FULFILLMENT OF UNFULFILLED PROVISIONS IN THE EXISTING AGREEMENT (REF A), A RENTAL CHARGE AND ASSOCIATED AID ASSISTANCE.

7. THERE DOES EXIST SOME PUBLIC CONFUSION ON THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE HOUSE ON ASSUMING TITLE TO THE LAND UPON WHICH THE NAVAL FACILITY IS LOCATED. CADDLE'S COMMENTS THAT TAKING TITLE FOR THE LAND FROM THE UK ADMIRALTY WAS THE FIRST STEP IN GETTING RID OF THE AMERICANS AND PUTTING THE LAND TO LOCAL USE CAN BE VIEWED IN THAT PERSPECTIVE. WHILE THE DAILY ADVOCATE-NEWS GOT THE STORY MORE OR LESS STRAIGHT UNDER A JULY 27 HEADLINE "BARBADOS WILL TRY TO RECOVER BENEFITS", THE BROADCAST MEDIA GENERALLY CONFUSED THE CHANGE OF TITLE OF THE LAND TO BARBADOS WITH GETTING THE FACILITY BACK FROM THE UNITED STATES. SOME BARBADIANS EVEN THINK THE FACILITY IS AN OPERATIONAL BASE. SUCH CONFUSION IS EASILY UNDERSTOOD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BRIDGE 01734 02 OF 02 272203Z

IN LIGHT OF THE AGE OF THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT, THE DISINTEREST OF THE DLP IN THE AGREEMENT AND IN THE FACILITY OPERATIONS OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS AND THE HITHERTO PRIVATE NATURE OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE USG AND GOB. JUST BEFORE THE VOICE VOTE THAT APPROVED THE TITLE TRANSFER, FORDE NOTED THAT THE 52 ACRES IN QUESTION ARE WORTH US\$30 MILLION. THIS FIGURE, WHEN DIVIDED BY THE 15 YEARS THAT A NEW AGREEMENT MIGHT RUN, MAY GIVE SOME INDICATION OF A YEARLY RENT FIGURE THE GOB COULD CONSIDER APPROPRIATE. THE LAND IS CLEARLY WORTH NOWHERE NEAR US\$30 MILLION. IT HAS POOR SOIL FOR AGRICULTURE, AND ITS BEACH FRONTAGE IS NOT SUITABLE FOR HOTEL DEVELOPMENT. THE BEST RETURN FOR ITS USE PROBABLY WOULD COME FROM CONTINUED USE BY THE NAVAL FACILITY. END COMMENT.
SIMMS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BRIDGE01734
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770269-0567
Format: TEL
From: BRIDGETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770715/aaaaamvx.tel
Line Count: 265
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 88098663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BRIDGETOWN 1720, 77 BRIDGETOWN 1695, 77 BRIDGETOWN 77
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1739226
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON RENEWAL OF NAVAL FACILITY AGREEMENT
TAGS: MARR, MPOL, PFOR, PGOV, PINR, BB, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/88098663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009